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The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

APRIL 1985



Bishop Ting — Sharing the Chinese experience

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APRIL 1985

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25 Years Ago

Faithfulness in discipleship is not easy under the pressures of our age. It requires will power, iron discipline, constantly renewed dedication at the foot of the cross, the rigorous taking of time from other matters to walk with the Lord. The minister is not called to be a hermit—to cultivation of the spiritual life in isolation, for he will find Christ in 'the crowded ways of life' and find the Saviour in ministering to one of the least of his brethren. Yet their needs must be in his heart and mind and in his study an 'upper room' of prayer and communion.

—Churchman, 1957.

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“In a short time...”



On the Seventh of March we had a team of Chinese Christians with us at the Synod Secretariat and I had an opportunity to talk to them, to listen to them and know more about their persecution during the 'cultural revolution' and how God had helped them to overcome their difficulties. If there is any church, in our times, which had experienced the gruesome nature of the Cross and the Church which had tasted the power of Resurrection it is the Church in China. How relevant are the words of Jesus Christ which were uttered on the night before his death. 'In a short time you will no longer see me, and then a short time later you will see me again . . . You will be weeping and wailing while the world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful but your sorrow will turn to joy . . .' (John 16: 16-22).

We are living in this short time, a time, indeed, full of pain and uncertainties. We are in a society which is undergoing a rapid transition and growing contradictions. The clouds of political upheaval have begun to gather thick in the sky and even surface of the society may show signs of wide cracks. The baneful effects of the unlimited political corruption have to be

stressed again and again because corruption is the main villain who has poisoned the tap-root of the body politics. Easy availability of the most sophisticated weapons to all kinds of regimes in some countries seems to have introduced many distortions in the historical process of the countries. The increasing military spending by the developing countries is alarming. What exactly will happen in the near future is difficult to fore-see. The uncertainties today are greater than they have been at any time in the last twenty-five years. The breakdown of all social discipline has assumed menacing proportions. To live this short time in the spirit of Jesus Christ means to reach out from the midst of our pains and uncertainties and let them turned into joy by His power. This was what happened to the Church in China. The Church was tested—tested by fire. But the power of Jesus changed the community into entirely different kind of people. The depressed and the disappointed people were transformed beyond recognition into a community full of hope. Transformed in love, the painful signs became signs of hope, as the wounds of Jesus did for the doubting Thomas.

During that 'short time' the Church became a matured community. It was a sign of spiritual maturity where the illusory self-control was given up and their hands were stretched to God. It was at this point they received the Spirit of the Resurrected Christ and became victorious. Their 'peoples Church' born in their homes at the time of the suffering period adds a new dimension to the very understanding of the Church. The characteristics of the Chinese such as bravery, vigour and vitality have now been channelled to the spread of the Gospel. The spirit of God is

moving in a mighty way producing plenteous spiritual harvests. With this new courage and new confidence derived from the experience of the Chinese Church we, in our trials and tribulations, can strengthen each other with the hopeful words of our Lord Jesus Christ: . . . You are sad now, but I shall see you again, and your hearts will be full of joy, and that joy no one shall take from you.' Let us look forward to this joy which the Resurrected Christ alone can give to us.

—DASS BABU.

NOTICE

—O—

The Easter Joy !!

It was a strange and dreadful strife,
When life and death contended;
The victory remained with life,
The reign of Death was ended:
Stript of power, no more he reigns;
An empty form alone remains;
His sting is lost for ever.

Then let us feast this Easter day
On the true Bread of heaven.

The word of grace hath purged away
The old and wicked leaven;
Christ alone our souls will feed,
He is our meat and drink indeed,
Faith lives upon no other.

—MARTIN LUTHER.

K

The Cross and My Community

REV. SATHIANATHAN CLARKE

Traditionally the cross has always been interpreted to us and for us Indians from an individualistic Vantage point. While a hermeneutic of the sort may well be justified as being thoroughly biblical, historical, doctrinal and also continuously relevant, it cannot invalidate the emerging search for a more community oriented perspective, in articulating the significance of the cross. In spite of my awareness of the large corpus of material written through centuries on the cross, I would like to avoid interaction with it. Rather I would like to explore into the community relevance of the most popular and characteristic symbol of Christians—the Cross.

In this paper I shall attempt to focus on questions and issues concerning the significance and relevance of the cross for 'my community', and its functional value in their belief system, life-style, struggles and history. It may be proper at this point to define the term 'my community'. The personalistic approach opted for, in working on this paper, is mainly to make no pretensions about its perspective or bias. 'My Community' is essentially the people I serve, in and around Karunguli, which is a rural station in Tamil Nadu, South India. More than Ninety per cent of these people are landless agricultural coolies. They are easily well below the poverty line, poorly clothed and fed, medically uncared for and live in large numbers within a small thatched hut. They are outcastes, immaterial of their religion, who are ironically referred to as God's children. 'My Community' even if essentially confined to Karunguli is a paradigm of all the millions in India who also suffer the same plight without a choice. It is this community that I have dared to call 'Indian Rural No-People'. It is on behalf of the Indian rural no-people that I venture to explore the symbol of the Cross.

Through this enquiry, one can notice a definite methodological shift. Normally an interpretation of the cross will originate and depend on histo-revelatory and metaphysical sources which are reputed and accepted to be authoritative i.e. Scripture, The Church fathers, dogmas, doctrinal statements, creeds etc. In this paper we shall reverse the procedure so that our starting point will be lower end, ascending from the ground up. In a sense, then, the meaning, significance and interpretation of the Cross is influenced by the context, situation and history of the community who are involved in the search for understanding.

The objective of this exploration, in using the inductive methodological option is three fold :

(i) Relevance for life : The functional value of the Cross is a major concern, so questions and issues that emerge from the peoples situation, demand interpretation that would do justice to and offer relevance to their ongoing mundane activity. In other words, it is assumed that a perspective, 'ascending from the ground up' (Rosino Gibelleni) would posit querries that necessitate relevant and meaningful interpretations to the same grassroot situation.

(ii) Indian-rural heritage is taken seriously : Hermeneutics, which mistakenly taken to be the work of only philosophical institutions, research centres and scholarly seminaries, is saved and brought closer to pragmatic reality. The people or 'No-people' exercise their right of interpretation and allow us an opportunity to comprehend their theological imagination i.e. an oppressed, rural poverty perspective.

(iii) The Cross is resurrected from mere dogma : The Cross is made to come alive in a new way for us rural Indian No-people. It becomes a living not out of the events of the past but because of its reality brought about by the Spirit in the here and now.

Having spelt out in detail the intention, scope, background and methodology of this paper, let me go straight on to the task of exploring the significance of the Cross in the light of the Indian Rural No-people.

1. Symbol of Solidarity :

S. G. F. Bradson's Dictionary of Comparative religion suggest that death on the cross was adopted by Romans as punishment of slaves, foreigners and criminals of lower class. The cross hence, symbolizes shameful death for an out-caste (foreigner) or oppressed class (lower class). In taking on the cross thus, Jesus was demonstrating a strange kind of solidarity with the very community that we refer to as the Indian Rural No-people. The cross and the one crucified, continue to stand in solidarity with all the out-castes, lower class and slaves, reassuring them constantly that He too has tasted of the bitter cup. J. Moltmann brings this truth out clearly in his words 'It is good but not sufficient to say that God is a "the fellow-sufferer who understands" (Whitehead), because God not only participates in our suffering but also makes our suffering his own and takes our death into his life.' But solidarity with the suffering does not, as I see, it simply end with Jesus' token solidarity on the Cross. Rather, because of the work of the Spirit, Christ continuously is present in all situations of human suffering, so that as the abandoned Son, along with us. He cries 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Me in this protest or cry could well be taken to be 'the least of these my brethren' (Mt. 25 : 40) who in our context are the Indian rural no-people.

For those critics who feel that I am overdoing the symbolism of the cross, let me attempt to show the intrinsic relationship between the cradle, the ministry and the cross, so as to point to the comprehensive character of this solidarity with the slave, outcaste and sinner. The cross is essentially the culmination of this strange and unacceptable solidarity with the outsider. It was this solidarity that threatened the oppressive structure and led to the cross.

The gospels clearly indicate that every time Jesus showed solidarity with the publican, tax-collector, unjust ones, sinners and outsiders, there was a more urgent conviction among the religious leaders that he must be put to death. The proclaiming of the Kingdom to sinners who repent and his bold stand to 'preferentially promise the Kingdom to the poor and the unjust, not because of their injustice, but because of God's grace' (Moltmann), testifies to this solidarity. Because of this stance Jesus carried his cross from the ministry onward. The cross thus always loomed over him because he resisted to opt for the *status quo*. So his death on the Cross outside the city wall, in shame and pain, was the sign that pointed through the birth, ministry and death of 'the man for others'.

In a very significant way then, from our perspective, the cross is the sign that God is with us and for us. Not only did he enter into the depths of our suffering, pain and agony, but because temporality is fluid in God's nature (Past, present and future belong to Him eternally). He is still suffering with us raising the continuous cry 'My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?' The only difference being, that now he cries with the power of the spirit, so that the cross in our time and context also because the symbol of power for us the powerless.

2. Symbol of Prophetic protest and Messianic invitation:

The dual categories of protest (judgment) and invitation (promise) always go together in the scripture, since it makes human choice involved in the history of salvation. The cross too, demands a decisive choice and thus symbolises the path or way of God in the midst of multifarious options. It leaves all humans with the necessity of making a choice in the light of God's own choice—the Cross.

As a sign of prophetic protest the cross seeks to negate all individuals, communities, powers, principalities, structures, systems and institutions that thwart or attempt to suppress the voice of the outsider, oppressed and non-human—the Indian rural no-people in our case. The cross seems to be a pathetic yet powerful cry of God against the structure of humans which had no place for him. It must be remembered that he stood for the outsider and so took on the sins and status of these outsiders. In this sense then, the cross stands for the Indian rural no-peoples message to the system, structure and power that threatens to do the same with them. The cross becomes God's prophetic word from them to the people of the system, calling them to a realization that in thwarting the no-people, history is repeating itself and God is being crucified in the name of keeping the *status quo*.

In the light of this symbolic protest, through the cross, another option gazes at human from the same piece of rugged wood. It symbolises the messianic invitation to be part of the plan of God in allowing the Kingdom to come. It pleads with humans to 'take up the cross and follow' the man for others. It seems to proclaim clearly that 'true christianity follows the man of Nazareth who was crucified by the priests and politicians of his people and by the imperial power of Rome' (Moltmann). Thus it invites all to live by the standards of the suffering servant rather than to gloat in the success through conformity to the powers of the world. The invitation is messianic

in nature because it presupposes the essential link, between the anointed one (Messiah) and the prophecy of the suffering servant. So the messianic invitation proclaims that it is only through the poverty, the humbleness, and the love of Jesus that God's Kingdom of majesty and freedom can come to those who are poor, abandoned and enslaved' (Moltmann). The way of the cross is thus the only way for us to be part of God's mission, as inaugurated in the suffering servant Jesus. Vicarious suffering cannot be ignored in God's invitation to live within the Kingdom. This, I believe has particular relevance to India and the role of the Indian Church which is called or invited to take the message of the prophecy of the cross of Christ into the world. Taking the message or messianic invitation of the cross to the world involves a 'simultaneous experiencing of the cross' (H. H. Rowley)—a participation in the reality of the cross. Jesus himself even before his death on the cross extends the same kind of Messianic invitation by 'using the cross to signify the suffering and death that his followers must be prepared to undergo (Matt. 10 : 38 ; 16 : 24 ; Mark 8 : 34 ; Luke 14 : 27)' (IDB vol. I). Perhaps the cross merely symbolically reminds us of this messianic invitation—the symbolic word to follow him.

3. Symbol of Hope :

Because God is in solidarity always with the No-people who suffer pain, agony, exploitation and alienation, and also because he protests and invites humans to join in the path of the cross for the well being of all the cross cannot but be looked upon with a feeling of hope. Also the historical interaction between the cross and the resurrection brings tangibility to this hope, so that pain, suffering and agony are promised Life in all its fullness. In the works of Moltmann 'Cross and resurrection characterise present and future in the anticipatory act of God.'

It may be relevant to note at this juncture that this hope does not ease the responsibility of the Christian in taking up the cross. Rather makes the task of the present meaningful in the light of the promise of the future—newness, complete restoration, kingdom of God, resurrection. Our hope thus saves us from desolation but does not free us of mundane kingdom—oriented responsibility. It is because of this hope that the Indian rural no-people will never give up or lose heart. Even centuries of caste, class and racial oppression cannot remove the flicker of hope that rests on the knowledge that God in Christ is in solidarity with us; that he is continually crying out from within us with the Power of the Spirit; that through his messianic invitation his people will join in the way of the cross and that historically the cross is resurrected to victory in Jesus' own resurrection. Our hope is thus grounded in faith in the symbolic message of the cross and in the historical nature of Jesus' own resurrection, for he was the first fruits of all that will be raised 'o life. In conclusion I would like to say along with Moltmann that 'the focus of christian hope is not simply the open future, but the future of the hopeless. The light of the resurrection illuminates the night of the cross and wants to illuminate those who are today consigned to the shadow of the cross.' It is because of this hope that the cross brings, that the Indian rural no-people will boldly proclaim 'we shall overcome' because 'if God be for us who can be against us' (Rom. 8 : 31).

The Cross and the Streets

THE RT. REV. DR. SUNDAR CLARKE, *Deputy Moderator*

The Editor has asked me to write on this subject and I am delighted to do so.

Today the Cross of Jesus Christ which was then outside the city wall has become the narrow confine and preserve of the Church and the Christian community. It has been limited to churches, pinnacles, signboards, necklaces, symbols carried by bishops and so have occupied traditional preserves.

We need to think of the Cross not only on the altar stand, not only on the Mount of Calvary but in the streets and in the life of the common man. In other words in our thinking, in our architecture and symbolism the Cross needs to be transferred from traditional places to untraditional places. It needs to be Christ and His Cross in common life, in the sufferings of our people, in the struggles of our communities, in the injustice and oppression both in our Churches and in society, etc. The Cross of Christ needs to be the universal availability of God to man. It needs to be carried through life the hard way, it needs to be Christ in public and open places. It is the redeeming act of God in the commonness of man and in the sufferings of suffering humanity. The Cross of Jesus should not be in the seclusion of places but in the public street of commonness. It is not the atonement of secrecy but the at-one-ment of God and man in the world. It is love publicly and openly demonstrated and made available to man and also the exposure of God's love in commonness.

Going back to the first Good Friday morning, we find the Cross amidst the dirt, the filth, the rugged road and the weight that had to be borne. Similarly today the Cross needs to be taken through the struggles of men offering liberation, the pain of humanity, offering a solution to the enigma of pain and suffering and also to the commonness in which man needs to find sacredness. The Cross in the street is perhaps what Bonhoeffer had in mind when he spoke about a 'sacred secularism', a 'holy worldliness'. The Cross stands as a symbol liberating man and giving a new interpretation to the world and to life.

In the historical process of secularization which seeks to deliver man from religious control, the Cross in the street has a sanctity to offer to man and gives a new meaning and interpretation to life which is sometimes thought of in terms of 'the defatualization of history'. Secularism is a force that turns man away from the religious world to the spacial world and the Cross is the force which centralises the religious world in the environment of a spacial world. This makes true Dietrich Bonhoeffer's phrase 'Man's coming of age'.

The Cross in the street gives to me another interpretation of God's revelation to man. God's redemptive act on the Cross was not just an event that drew men to Calvary, it is also an event that took God and the Cross to the streets of Jerusalem. Jesus Christ on the Cross is not only God drawing man unto Himself but also as the Cross in the street going forth searching for lost humanity. The Cross has not only the magnetic power but also an explosive force in redemption. The Cross in the street is the redeeming God breaking forth into the fullness of man and the universe. It is an act of redeeming man, humanity and the universe.

Another aspect of the Cross in the street takes us to Jerusalem and to perhaps a rather emotional scene. The whole atmosphere is filled with feelings, emotions, broken hearts, tearing eyes as Christ carries the Cross to Golgatha. The Cross in the street could become a mere sentiment or a mere emotion but the Christ of the Cross says to the wailing women: 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children' (Luke 23:27). Very often we are so full of feelings for the suffering Lord and this is quite natural and human but the Cross on the street wants us to go beyond the area of objective feeling into an area of subjectivity. The Cross bearing master wants us to look within to introspect, to see that which has caused the Cross to be in the street. This Lent a silent introspective reflection would perhaps be more helpful than suffering in objectivity.

Finally the Cross in the street in Jerusalem gives a model lesson for us today. Along with the Lord who carried the Cross, there needs to be a Simeon of Cyrene—a fellow bearer of the Cross. Simeon of Cyrene could have taken to his heels but he preferred to have a small share in the sufferings of Jesus Christ. He wanted to be a sufferer along with the suffering God, he wanted to be a yoke fellow of suffering. This perhaps throws some light on many of us who go through pain, suffering, physical separation and the pangs of bereavement. May we remember that the Cross on the street should provide for a Simeon of Cyrene. God is calling us to have a share in His suffering so that we will be assured that all our sufferings are a small portion of Jesus Christ who suffered the most.

To me this seems to be the message of the Cross on the street. The Cross in commonness, the Cross in a secular world having a message for secularization. The Cross also has an identification with the oppressed, the suffering and stands in their midst as a liberating force. It calls us to go beyond objectives, sentimentality, to subjective self-realization and finally the Cross on the street has a message to the problem of suffering. Perhaps the only religion that can throw light on the problem of pain and suffering is the religion of the Cross in the street.

The Greatest Day

Rt. REV. K. C. SETH, Shoranur

The festival of the resurrection of our Blessed Lord is the greatest day in the whole Christian year. It is the day when Christians all over the world celebrate with joy the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. In spite of all the signs of joy after a long season of lent, there is, deep down in our hearts, a doubt that cannot be removed so easily. Is the resurrection really true? Archbishop Tait tells about one of his theology students, a committed German young man. He was a member of the Lutheran church. He did not believe in the resurrection. Yet he professed the greatest respect for the writings of St. Paul. Archbishop Tait called his attention to the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. He read it, shut the book, and said 'Yes, this is a fancy that St. Paul had; he was a good man, but he was altogether mistaken!'. This is true of many of the believing Christians today, not only ordinary Christians, but students and teachers of theology also. Did Jesus really rise from the dead and open unto us and our loved ones the gates of eternal life? Or is it perhaps, as the early Apostles first thought, a tale told by a bunch of hysterical women? Someone has asked, 'Are you whistling in the dark when you sing the Easter hymns on an Easter day morning?'

The question 'Did Jesus really rise from the dead' has haunted men's hearts all down the ages. Death has an awe-inspiring finality about it. It is the custom in my village for the old church bell to toll the age of any one who dies. I used to count the tolling of the bell. Sometimes it was seventy, sometimes eighty, sometimes it would be away down among the teens. Sometimes it would toll out the death of someone of my age. It made a solemn impression upon me. I felt a coward then. I thought of the cold hand of death feeling for the cords of life. I thought of being launched forth to spend my eternity in an unknown land. As I looked into the grave, and saw people throw earth on the coffin lid, 'Earth to earth; ashes to ashes; dust to dust', it seemed like the death knell to my soul. But that is all changed now. As I go on towards the goal of my life, I can chant, 'oh death, where is your power to hurt' (1 Cor. 15:55). Many books have been written on the facts of resurrection. They set forth all the evidences and reasons which have led to the conviction that the narratives of the resurrection are in fact a true statement of the fact of resurrection. These facts were also written within the life time of men and women who had actually witnessed the events they described. Let us consider the facts about which there is no shadow of doubt.

First of all there is the fact that near the city of Jerusalem, then in the Roman province of Judaea, during the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Jesus was put to death by crucifixion by the order of Pilate, the then Governor of the State. It is a historical fact. There are only few references about this Jesus in the works of contemporary writers. He was unknown except to a small circle in Palestine. He had only a local fame. No record of his life or his

teachings had been written at the time of his death. The records written after his death make no secret of the fact that he died a failure. He did not have the glory of a martyrdom because his crucifixion was carried out with the full approval of the State and Church. No one but his mother and a few intimate friends had any reason to remember him, but they too did so with bitterness. There was no evidence to show that Jesus was destined for anything but complete oblivion. This was the situation on the eve of the feast of the passover, about the eighteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar.

The second fact is that on Easter about two thousand years afterwards, thousands of people, intelligent men and women, of many race, nationality and colour, come to the churches to worship Jesus as God. They come to worship him with gladness and thanksgiving for a great victory. These are two facts which by themselves do not make much sense. They need a third fact to bring them into an intelligible relationship. In order to account for this amazing change, something must have happened. What is it that has happened? It has been said, the testimony of the Apostles of Jesus should top the list of the authoritative testimony of the world's most accurate and reliable witnesses. They were eyewitnesses to what had happened and their lives were completely changed by that happening. They had been cowards. They had been frightened because of the cruelties which accompanied the crucifixion of Jesus. They had all fled from the scene. They had denied Jesus and vouched that they had no connection whatsoever with him. But, on the strength of what happened three days after the crucifixion, they started a revolution which changed human history. They turned the world upside down. They were unanimous that the same Jesus whom they had seen crucified, dead and buried, had risen from the dead, that they had seen him and had talked with him, not once or twice, but many times. The Apostles made no secret of the fact that they had stubbornly refused to believe the fact of the resurrection. But they were so overwhelmingly convinced that they laid down their own lives to witness to this fact. This is the explanation of the first two irreconcilable facts. This is the explanation given by the eyewitnesses. This is accepted by the Holy Catholic Church. This is the explanation of the church's existence in spite of all the persecutions. On the third day after his crucifixion Jesus rose again from the dead. This is the glorious good news we proclaim when we celebrate the feast of resurrection on Easter day.

It is not on Easter day that our faith is tested. It calls for no deep conviction when we join the crowd in singing Easter hymns. The test comes when we stand beside the open grave of a dear one. In such a moment we readily understand why Peter and John dismissed what Mary Magdalene told them as an imaginative story and why St. Thomas doubted the fact of resurrection. But when they

(Continued on p. 10)

[APRIL 1985]

CHRISTIANS AND OTHER FAITHS'

REV. DR. CHRISTOPHER DURAISINGH
Bangalore

...When we come to share in the common memory of Asian people's suffering, their liberational praxis and their hope, we will also be led to reorient our theological understanding. When theology arises out of our shared lives with the people of Asia who live by different symbols of salvation, a radical re-visioning of God, God's liberating activity in the world and the nature of the church and her mission will be possible... Let me very briefly identify a few consequences for our theological understanding of our seeking community with persons of other faiths...

Forms of distorted and exclusive emphasis on redemption that lead to a spirit of separation of Christians from all else must be questioned. All over Asia, an exclusiveness was encouraged by early missionaries and it is even now perpetuated by forms of evangelistic enterprises often financed from outside the continent. Any emphasis upon doctrine of redemption of the exclusion of the doctrine of creation must be questioned. When we understand the doctrine of creation rightly, we know that we belong together along with our non-Christian brothers and sisters to God. We cannot artificially separate ourselves from the rest of the human community in the name of experience of redemption.

As we see co-operation with persons of other faiths in Asia—we will be led to understand the nature of the church anew as well. We shall refuse to understand the church and the world in antithetical terms. We shall be enabled to recognize that the church and the world are not two separate spheres of action of God. God is not first related to the church in a special way and then secondarily to the world. The Bible constantly bears witness to the universal movement of the Spirit in all of creation.

God's liberative action embraces the whole world. The church is only a segment, a part, of the world that God loves and in whose history God continually acts; but church is that part which is called upon to consciously acknowledge God's liberative presence in the world and to witness to it. Therefore openness to persons of other faiths is an essential mark of the church. A church which is not inside turned out is not the church of Christ. It is only through a dialogical existence freely participating in the social and spiritual movements of contemporary Asia that the church can be truly what it is called to be namely the sign of God's liberating presence in the world....

A radical reorientation in our understanding of the goals of our institutions is also called for. If God's kingdom is the primary focus and God's liberating mission is prior to our response, then the goal of all that we do is not a world-embracing church but rather a world-embracing experience of shalom, just peace, or a human community in justice, peace with fellowship. Here, we should be able to identify the distinction between mission and missionizing. To what extent and in what manner the YMCA's as a lay Christian movement can manifest such an understanding of the nature of the church and mission. I do believe that only such an understanding is conducive to the task of our seeking partnership with people of other faiths.

(This article is excerpted from a seminar's articles on
"Renewed vision of the YMCA in contemporary Asia."
E.P.S.)

NEW DIRECTORS

EDUCATION



REV. C. RETNA DAS

Rev. C. Retna Das of Kanyakumari Diocese has been appointed as the director of the newly formed Council for Mission and Evangelism.

He started his career as an Evangelist in the diocese, serving in two churches. He was sent to Nepal as a Missionary in Co-ordination with the United Mission to Nepal where he worked in the fields of literature and Evangelism for a period of 4 years—1968 to 1972.

On his return from Nepal he served the diocese in various capacities—convener of the Social Action Committee of the diocese; Honorary Librarian of Pastor's Library, Editor of *Malai Malar* and was also sharing the responsibilities of the diocese as the Vice-President and Treasurer. He was also looking after a CASA project at Sinclairpuri.

He took his M.A. from Nepal (1972) and B.D. from Serampore (1975).



REV. B. S. DEVAMANI

Rev. B. S. Devamani, the new director of the Pastoral Aid Department is from the diocese of Karimnagar in Andhra Pradesh. Before ordination he worked as a Junior Lecturer and since ordination he has studied at the General Theological Seminary in New York and served in Emmanuel Parish, Cryodon, Canterbury Diocese, U.K. Most recently he worked with a Telugu and English congregation in Kasipet, in the diocese of Karimnagar. He took over from Rev. William Moses.

A Resurrection Experience: Life of the Church in China

THE REV. DR. SAMUEL AMIRTHAM

'If I am to say in one or two words the most important and precious message that God has given to us in the last thirty-five years, I think one way to express it is the joy of resurrection, the joy of knowing the risen Christ.' It was the privilege of fourteen Asian theological teachers to share in and witness to this 'resurrection experience' of the Chinese Church, so described by Bishop K. H. Ting, the President of the Three Self Movement and the Nanjing Theological Seminary. It is no exaggeration to say that this central experience of the Chinese Church lies also at the very centre of the theological education enterprise that is being built up in China. Visitors to the Chinese Church cannot but be impressed and moved by its vitality, dynamism, Chinese-ness, Christ-centredness, and evangelistic commitment.

The visit was coordinated by the Association of Theological Education in South East Asia, sponsored by the Programme on Theological Education of the World Council of Churches, the Commission for Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia and the Fund for Theological Education in South East Asia.

The idea was mooted during the Vancouver Assembly with the following objectives: (a) to affirm Christian fellowship with colleagues in theological education in China; (b) to find out how they are doing theology and to learn from them; (c) to discover how the Chinese Church deals with its involvement in the social, economic and political life of the nation; (d) with sensitivity Chinese friends can begin to participate in theological education events in Asia outside their country; (e) to learn in particular how extension education is carried out, and if ecumenical experience can be shared. The team wanted to listen and learn, being ready at the same time to share.

People's Ministry

It needs a lot of imagination to realize that a small room in the Nanjing Seminary coordinates a 40,000 member strong education by extension programme. Once a month 'syllabi' is prepared and is sent quarterly to leaders of house meeting points. It contains Bible Study and other material, primarily resources to those lay persons who nurture the majority of three million Christians across the country in worship, Scripture and pastoral care. This, we felt was a very important aspect of the Seminary's ministry to the Church. The 185 students who study there, among whom are 71 women, would form only a very small part of this large leadership. This is a transformation that has come through the experience of the last thirty-five years. When the seminaries ceased to function, a new type of pastoral leadership arose and with it new forms of training to equip them.

Bishop Ting told us of an ordination service a year ago where 18 people were ordained, 12 men and 6 women. The average age of those ordained is 63.7. More interesting than their age is their qualifications. In the Bishop's

words, 'Well, we decided to ordain them, because they were sure of God's will, because they were gifted, and because they have done very good pastoral work, especially during the years of the cultural revolution.' Being tested with fire in trial situations, and living in faithful discipleship are some of the new criteria for leadership there. 'In order to be a holy people, a holy priesthood, to do God's holy work, we had to go through certain trials' the Bishop said.

The numbers who apply for admission for theological training is impressive. For admission to the Nanjing Seminary 500 applied last year out of whom only 60 were selected. The proportion in other places is not dissimilar.

We were told that most regional churches run one month to three month courses for lay persons. Factory workers and commune farmers also come to these training programmes, sometimes with official leave and salary support.

Women take an increasing place in theological education and church leadership. The Protestant Church ordains women, there are women theological teachers, in Nanjing, 6 out of 20. Many women take active leadership roles in the Church. When we were talking to the Roman Catholic bishop in Beijing, the Most Rev. Michael Fiu Tieshan, he told us of the Chinese saying, 'Ladies have half of heaven' and explained how women serve in the Church affairs committees, the Catholic Patriotic Movement and its Standing Committee and in local parishes. The religious orders are no more operating as orders, but their members are still serving. A new order is being developed in Zushow.

People's Church

That the churches are overflowing for worship in China is well known. In Hangzhou in the Si Deng Church wherein the pre-revolution days the normal attendance would have been 300-500, the morning service that we attended had about 1,500. For the afternoon service, attendance we were told would be about 1,000 and for the evening service for young people who go for work in the day time, about 600-700. As of September 1984, 1,800 churches have been reopened. Every two or three days a new church is being opened somewhere in China.

The pastors are supported by the congregations. A good part of theological education expenses are also borne by the congregations. The new Seminary Building Fund with a budget of 20,000 yuan in Hangzhou was soon over-subscribed up to 50,000 yuan. An enviable situation in Asia. Some of the pastors are part-time teachers. Some theological teachers are part-time teachers in other secular institutions. The buildings are simple. In Beijing and in Hangzhou they use church offices, pastors' houses or any other building available. The stipends are modest. In Nanjing the undergraduate students receive 37 yuan (US \$ 12.95) per month and the postgraduate 45 yuan. Usually the sending congregations support them.

Nanjing has beautiful multi-storied buildings, built by the contributions of churches, and rent money, paid by bodies that used these buildings for their purposes during the cultural revolution. The land belongs to the State but the churches are allowed to use it. So Nanjing Seminary is putting up flats and commercial buildings in collaboration with building firms, increasing their facilities and income. Beijing hopes that the former seminary buildings will be restored to them soon. Theological education has become fully the responsibility of the Chinese Church. The Church imaginatively puts to use the existing facilities available, as they continue to improve on them.

Self-reliance in theological education already achieved will surely pave the way for self-determination in priorities and perspectives of theology in the Church. This achievement is of special significance when one remembers that theological education in the rest of Asia is still heavily dependent on support from the churches in the West.

One of the emphases in the life of the Church is Christian witness in the normal context of everyday life and work. The fact that the Church has become truly Chinese, identifying itself with the Chinese nation, and Chinese people provide new opportunities for evangelism. 'People's Daily' recently reported about the 400 Christians who were recognized progressive and exemplary factory workers. Prof. Dr. Gao Wangzhi, the Director in charge of Christian studies at the Beijing Institute for the Study of World Religions trying to analyze the reasons for the phenomenal growth of the Protestant Church from 700,000 in 1949 to the present estimated 3 million, identified three factors: influence of parents on children, the exemplary lives of Christians praised even by Party cadres, and the growing interest and need of young people in spirituality. K. H. Ting said on the increase of the Church, 'We are very thankful to God for this increase and, on the human side, you cannot account for the increase except by admitting that it is the fact that the churches in China have become more Chinese that has made more Chinese people willing to hear what Christianity has to say to them.'

The Three Self Movement has new opportunities to participate in the nation building attempts of the Chinese people. All religious groups are represented in the Chinese Peoples' Political Consultative Convention (CPPCC) Standing Committees which are constituted nationally and locally. Bishop Ting is a member of the National Standing Committee.

This opportunity is doubly significant, Bishop Ting explained. It provides for Christians to fulfill their duty as citizens. In the CPPCC all important state policies are discussed and decided. Christians can express their opinions and criticisms. Secondly, it provides an evangelistic opportunity. Christian existence and active presence is made known in such forums. Political leaders sometimes want to learn about Christianity and discussions on religious matters follow. Bishop Ting said that he gave away 4 Bibles during the last meeting. Evangelism in China in a real belongs to the people.

The Chinese Church is a post-denominational Church, at least as far as the structures are concerned. In faith

worship and observances, the special emphases are still preserved and not obliterated. Seventh Day Adventist continue their foot-washing rite; the Little Flock their special practices, the Anglicans preserve their traditional ways of worship and understanding of sacraments. At Nanjing five ways of taking Communion are observed. There is no pressure to create one unified Church, or one unified Church order. The policy of mutual respect is followed. The China Christian Council looks after the Christian nature of Christians. By their efforts, 1,300,000 Bibles have been printed so far. In Hangzhou province 200,000 copies of hymnal were published in May 1983, with 400 hymns, 100 of which are original Chinese compositions with 50 of them new. They are sold at 1.6 yuan paperback and 2.5 yuan for hardback. A second printing of 250,000 is in the press, and a further 100,000 of a large print edition. The Three Self Movement liaises with the government officially for purposes such as restoration of church buildings or collection of rent, representing the grievances of Christians to the government, and proper implementation of religious freedom of policy of his state.

A special phenomenon of the Chinese Church is the meeting of Christians in homes and other places. It is estimated that there are at least ten thousand such groups. When during the cultural revolution the churches were closed Christians continued to meet in homes and this practice continues. It provides an opportunity for close Christian fellowship, prayer, Bible Study and sharing. Where churches are too far to get to, or no churches exist, they serve as normal context for Christian worship. In a few cases they are also opposed to the Three Self Movement, because these Christians do not share the latter's official position that Christians should participate in the nation building, cooperating with a Communist and anti-theistic government. That 'Christians should love Christ and their country' is the Three Self Movement position; that these are mutually incompatible is the view of some small groups. It was explained to us that this difference in theological position and existence of sectarian house meetings is often exaggerated and exploited by Christian groups abroad. Most Christians attend worship in churches on Sundays and participate in the home meetings weekdays. Bishop Ting's mother, now 98, has a group meeting in her own home.

At the discussion with the pastors and elders at the Chong Wen Meng Christian Church we raised the question of the relationship of the Church to the party and the State. Our friends said, 'People often ask how can we work together with the Communist Party when we believe in God and they are atheist. The Communist Party is doing something good for the nation. Everybody has enough food and clothing. As a result, we have warm feelings built towards them. Many Christians are in influential places in society and people recognize both their witness for Jesus Christ and the way they are building up the nation. Once one is committed to being a Christian there are fewer temptations than before since there is now for example no gambling and no prostitution. The Three Self Movement has helped bridge the gap in helping Christians know the nature of their responsibility to the nation.'

(To be continued)





Some Members of the Chinese Christian Delegation

THE CHINESE CHRISTIAN DELEGATION

The Working Committee of the Synod had a unique privilege of receiving the members of the Chinese Christian Delegation, eleven member team led by the Bishop K. H. Ting, who came to Madras on the 7th March.

Moderator Jesudason, reminding the ten-year persecution of the Church in China, called them 'vicarious' and accorded a warm welcome to them in a traditional way by presenting shawls to all the members. Wall plaques with the C.S.I. emblem and some of the publications were presented by the General Secretary, Rev. M. Azariah.

A set of colour slides and a cassette on the Life of Jesus Christ, produced by the Communications Department were also presented. Narrating the history of the Church of South India, Bishop Victor Premasagar spoke about the priorities for the mission of the Church—how they were fixed and being implemented.

Replying to the 'affectionate welcome' given to them Bishop Ting, while thanking, said that they came to the C.S.I. to collect material and 'taste the rich experience of

being together as the uniting Church in India'. Speaking about the days of the persecution when all the religious activities including the public worship were banned, the Bishop told the members that the worship in homes with friends and family members gained importance and became necessary as they 'celebrated Eucharist, read Bible and sang hymns in homes and the meaning of the priesthood of all Christians was experienced during those days.'

Answering to a question the Bishop informed that the religious freedom was now given, not only to Christians, but also to Buddhists, Muslims Confucian and other faiths. As a result of it there is revival and renewal among other faiths also seen. The desire of the Church, he added, is to offer spiritual nurture to its members and evangelise the whole country, depending on their own resources and local leadership. Expressing his optimistic views about the unity the Bishop said that 'the Uniting Church of China is the gift to the younger generation by the old.'

The Greatest Day—(Continued from p. 6)

were convinced, they went out (St. Thomas even to the shores of India), and, despite hatred, imprisonment, torture and death, 'turned the world upside down'. There is an important factor in the process of their conviction. This factor is that they were able to recognise him, though at first there was some difficulty. They recognised him because they really knew him. They had been with him constantly, on the mount of transfiguration, in the darkness of Gethsamene, in the storm on the sea of Galilee

and in the upper room. If they had not been there in the upper room for the last supper, Jesus could not have made himself 'known to them in the breaking of bread'. We can hardly expect to recognise the Saviour when we have made no effort to find him and know him specially at the Holy Eucharistic Service. But those who find him and try to follow him as the early Apostles did, can testify to the fact that in the dark hours of life, they hear within their hearts a voice they recognise 'I am with you always, even to the end of the world'.

Not the Love for Power but the Power of Love

REV. DR. S. IMMANUEL DAVID *

Bangalore

Texts : Zachariah 9 : 9-10 and Luke 19 : 28-44.

The Palm Sunday scenario described in these texts bristles with power and majesty.

Listen and experience the mood that the pageantry portrays. First in Zachariah : 'Rejoice, rejoice, people of Zion ! Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem ! Look, your king is coming to you ! he comes triumphant and victorious, but humble and riding on a donkey—on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'

The Lord says : 'I will remove the war chariots from Israel, and take the horses from Jerusalem, the bows used in battle will be destroyed, your king will make peace among the nations, he will rule from sea to sea, from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.'

And hear the antiphon of Zachariah's passage from the Gospel according to Luke : 'Hosanna, Hosanna, Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest Hosanna.'

Jesus was riding into Jerusalem on a young donkey, accompanied by shouts of onlookers who were spreading palm branches on the road before as he went. He rode on a simple donkey but he rode with the dignity and majesty of a king. Those people shouting around him were excited, full of turbulence and unrest. They hailed him as the King, the deliverer. As the crowd came over the last rise in the road and saw Jerusalem spread out before them, Jesus wept. There are seeming difficulties in the timing of this scene. The spirit of the procession with its royal entrance into the city was joyous and triumphant, yet Jesus wept. He realises that it was here that the ultimate conflict with evil would take place. It was here the king must come, not to support the love for power but to convince them of the power of love.

This is the pathos of the scene. Out of all that crowd only Jesus perceived a sense of the impending tragedy, that he was riding to his death on the cross. As Jesus rode he tried to demonstrate his purpose—he came on a lowly animal, the donkey, rather than a war horse. He came not with a sword but with the message of God's redemptive love, he came as teacher of peace rather than violence. He portrayed the power of love rather than the love for power... The people did not understand—the city was blind to its visitation—it refused to recognize the things that make for peace. And I'm wondering about us. Are we blind to it also ? Do we recognize God's moment when it comes ? Let us study our situation more closely.

Christian tradition and history have provided for us a basis for what we believe. Most of us have known and even experienced for a good long time that Jesus came as a Messiah, he took flesh and dwelt among us and ultimately offered his life on Calvary as a gigantic gift of love. Therefore, in a sense we differ from those people processing on that Palm Sunday. They were timed before the fact, we came after. We ought know better than to act as if we aren't aware of what power of love is all about. There are centuries of proof behind us which point to that. But at the same time we still behave as those people who accompanied that man on the donkey. We, too, still demonstrate a belief in the love for power. We think that the only way to get rid of evil power is to use greater power.

I would like to present some information about the world priorities today. To these we might assign the phrase 'love for power'. Listen :

In pounds per person, the world has more explosive power than food.

Governments spend more for space research than for health research, four times more for research on weapons than on energy. Developing nations, with 600 million people who cannot afford the basic necessities of life, spend over \$90 billion a year on military power.

The world invests 2500 times more in the machinery of war than in the machinery of peace keeping.

How will historians of the future write about the militarized world of ours ? What kind of world will they imagine, that kept adding to the vast pool of nuclear waste ? What will they write about the war games we play where no one could win, but that required both aggressor and defender alike to sacrifice hundreds of millions of their people in nuclear deaths ? When nuclear weapons were developed and there proved to be no defence against them, was it a sense of irony that led governments to rename their war ministries as 'defence' ministries ?

Whether we like it or not, these are true facts about the priorities of our world—the love for power indeed !

But lest we experience a feeling of doom, let me quickly remark that there can be another side to the coin. To this side we will assign the term 'power of love' with Christ as its representative.

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There are alternatives—choices between the military excesses of the present and a future emphasizing peaceful mechanisms of international cooperative action. For example let us suppose that even 10% of military funds could be diverted to constructive social purposes as a goal. At current prices this would provide about \$50 billion a year for replacing swords by plowshares—the love for power by the power of love.

Approximately two billion people in the world, mostly citizens of developing countries, do not have access to a dependable sanitary supply of water. Five billion dollars could be assigned to the pursuance of safe water for all within a decade.

The pace of population growth is seen as excessive by governments of developing nations, threatening the solution of malnutrition, unemployment, overcrowding. Military funds could be used in the direction of family planning and maternal health services.

Research and development for labour, intensive low-cost technology, primary schools and teacher training, direct food-aid for the hungry, literacy drive specially among women, vaccine protection for all children, a global

programme to wipe out malaria—the possibilities are unending.

The power of love to be sure. By supporting such possibilities we would be instrumental in changing the course of human events. In Zachariah it also says, 'not by might, nor by power but by my spirit says the Lord of Hosts'.

We are charged with answering—with the singing of an antiphony to Zachariah's prophecy today. What will be the refrain? Is it to be the love for power or the power of love, which shall prevail?

Jesus rode into Jerusalem in the midst of a hostile world demonstrating his trust in the power of God's love, the most effective weapon in all the world. He was spat upon, crowned with thorns and crucified on a cross in a week to follow. And then the resurrection. What about us? What song shall we sing—we who profess to be disciples of that man who rode on the donkey—we who can know what it is to experience the risen Lord in our lives?

Let our prayer be that we may be loosened from the bonds so that we might leap forward to embrace the way of Christ. So be it. Hosanna!

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NEWS from the DIOCESES

SOUTH KERALA DIOCESE

FELICITATIONS TO THE MOST REV. I. JESUDASON, MODERATOR, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS SIXTIETH BIRTHDAY

The Most. Rev. I. Jesudason, Moderator of the Church of South India and the Bishop in South Kerala Diocese celebrated his 60th birthday on February 14, 1985. The diocese as a whole is grateful before God Almighty for showering His blessings upon this diocese through the invaluable contributions of our Bishop during the last 12 years to make the South Kerala Diocese what it is today.

Most Rev. I. Jesudason was born on February 14, 1925 as the fourth son of the late Rev. Isaiah and Smt. Lizy Isaiah at Amaravila. He took his B.D. in 1953 from the Serampore College, and M.Th. Degree from the Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur. Even before securing these theological titles he had started his ministry in the Church. That was in 1950.

His devotion to his chosen ministry and his commitment to the Gospel made him one of the most eminent and beloved pastors. By his success in all fields of his activities he was elevated to the position of the Vice-Chairman of the South Kerala Diocese. Later he was called to teach in the Kerala United Theological Seminary, Trivandrum.

In 1964 he proceeded to the United States for higher studies and on his return was made the Principal of the K.U.T. Seminary. In 1972, consequent to the demise of Bishop William, he was made the Moderator's Commissary of the Diocese.

The Most Rev. I. Jesudason was consecrated Bishop of the South Kerala Diocese on 5th August 1973. In 1980 he was elected the Deputy Moderator of the Church of South India. The 18th Synod of the C.S.I. which met at Vellore in 1982 elected him the 8th Moderator of the Church of South India. He was re-elected to this honoured position in 1984.

It is not possible to recount all the blessings God has bestowed on the diocese and on the Church as whole through the untiring efforts of this servant of our Lord. Being a deeply spiritual person and a man of prayer Bishop Jesudason's prime concern was evangelisation. His concern was amply rewarded when more than 80 new congregations were added to the diocese. A number of new congregations are being formed. Most of the village Churches were provided with new buildings for which he raised assistance from inside and outside the diocese. Prayer Groups and Gospel Bands were organized in most of the congregations and they give a new impetus to all the evangelical enterprises.

Bishop Jesudason embarked upon a new project of sending missionaries from the diocese to the various parts of India. The first venture was in Andhra Pradesh,

and the Ettunagaram Mission Field, fully supported by the Diocese, is flourishing year after year. There is a proposal to open another mission field in Orissa. The unstinted assistance and encouragement he gives to the Home Missionary Society has helped them to initiate missionary work on numerous new fields within the diocese itself.

Bishop Jesudason's Social commitment is too well-known to be mentioned. He preaches and strives for the total liberation of man—liberation from sin as well as from social injustice and the oppression of dehumanising powers. Care of the destitute, disabled and old people, education for the socially backward, technical education to the unemployed, job opportunities to the poor etc., are some of the many fields in which the Bishop has shown very keen attention. The Christian College at Kattakada enjoys the prestige of owning an imposing Science Block solely because of the endeavours of our Bishop. Several Technical Education Institutions where the best possible training in rare trades are imparted were contemplated and started by our Bishop. The internationally renowned Home for the Handicapped, the Light to the Blind and the School for the Deaf and Dumb flourish under his loving care. More than 1500 destitute children are being looked after in several Homes.

The Village uplift projects launched at Nadukani has won the acclaim of the people and the State Government. The second project of the same nature at Mullumala is another crowning success in the field of Social action. There are similar projects working at Pantha, Manjaakal and Thekkada.

Several impressive buildings were constructed to meet the increasing needs of the diocese. A multi-storied hostel for working women, a new two-storied hostel building for girls, the building complex for the Polio Home, well-furnished buildings for the different Children's Homes etc., are some of the substantial constructions which have been completed. A very huge building project known as Child Welfare Complex is taking shape in the head-station compound. A new commercial building is nearing completion at Puthenchantha.

As a very efficient administrator, Bishop Jesudason could bring about radical changes by streamlining the administration of the Central Office and those of various Boards, Committees and Institutions. Today, the diocese enjoys a sound financial footing chiefly because of the far-seeing and efficient methods employed to maintain steady income and the prudence and austerity with which money is spent.

His sense of understanding, sympathetic approach to persons and problems, winning humility and the unique ability in solving problems have helped Bishop Jesudason to guide the diocese to the realms of peace and prosperity. The diocese looks forward to be guided and protected by God Almighty for many years to come through the brilliant, spotless and sacrificial services of our Bishop.

Most Rev. I. Jesudason as the Moderator of the Church of South India has made remarkable contributions to the Church as a whole. He has made successful efforts in creating a new awareness in the Church of its immediate Social responsibilities. He could voice his thoughts and ideas very effectively in several national and international forums and they were heard and appreciated by Churches all over the world. The positive interest shown by the Methodist Church in India in renewing the discussions for Union with the C.S.I. is a remarkable step forward in this direction. Most Rev. I. Jesudason had the occasion to travel far and wide all over the globe representing the Church in various international conferences and consultations. His contributions are prized by the World Council of Churches, in the Central committee of which he is a member. He serves as the Executive member of the Council for World Mission, as the member of the Anglican Consultation Council, as the Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of CASA, member of the World Vision and member of the Board of Education Theological Serampore University. He served as Chairman of Malayalam Theological Literature Committee and he published books on Hinduism and Life of St. Paul. He has successfully introduced a few administrative reforms in the Synod level too. The Synod Councils for Medical and Educational work has brought under independent directorate to provide facility to work more purposefully and effectively.

These are only some of the very many fields our Bishop was called upon to serve and in which he has served faithfully with success. There are several other fields which await his services. Our Bishop is sixty. God has been gracious to our Bishop so far. We expect greater things from God to be fulfilled through His servant.

On this happy occasion of the 60th birthday of our Bishop the diocese with heads bowed in all humility and hearts filled with gratitude before God pray for his health, long life and Spiritual strength in full measure.

THE Rs. 5 LAKH CHARITY FUND

The South Kerala Diocese has been fortunate enough to enjoy the blessings of the great services of the Most Rev. I. Jesudason for the last 38 years. The Diocese remembers with profound gratitude before God the yeoman services rendered by our beloved Bishop in various capacities as a Minister, Principal of the Theological Seminary, Bishop of the Diocese and the Moderator of the Church of South India. Now he is sixty.

To commemorate this great occasion the diocese proposes to institute a fund—BISHOP JESUDASON 60TH BIRTHDAY MEMORIAL CHARITY FUND.

We propose to collect a fund of Rs. FIVE LAKHS to be profitably invested in some concern and the entire proceeds will be utilised for constructing HOUSES TO THE POOR.

Most Rev. I. Jesudason has all along been deeply concerned with the problems of the poor and the destitute. So we consider this the most fitting tribute to him on this occasion.

We invite you to contribute generously for the Rs. 5 LAKH FUND which will be collected from 14-2-1985 onwards. Any donation—whatever may be the amount

you donate—will be a most welcome contribution to the Fund. You may pay the amount as a lump sum or in monthly instalments. We propose to close the collection within one year, before 14-2-1986.

Churches, institutions and individuals are invited to contribute.

Kindly write to 'THE TREASURER, SOUTH KERALA DIOCESE (C. S. I.), L. M. S. COMPOUND, TRIVANDRUM-695 033.' Send your contributions by cash or cheque to the above address.

—The Diocese

EAST KERALA DIOCESE

Diocesan Day

The East Kerala Diocese celebrated its First Diocesan Day and Sixtieth Birthday of Rt. Rev. K. Michael John, Bishop of East Kerala Diocese, recently at Erumapramattom. The celebrations which marked the significance of the First Anniversary of the consecration of the bishop, turned out to be the red-letter day in the history of the diocese. Thousands of jubilant people vibrant with enthusiasm and thanks to Almighty God, from various parts of the diocese participated in the celebrations. When this large gathering of people with different ethnic background, but with one faith in one God, gathered together, diversity seemed to be merging into unity.

The thanksgiving service before the public meeting was graced by the esteemed presence and inspiring message of Rt. Rev. Geevarghese Mar Osthathos of Orthodox Church. He wished Bishop Michael John hearty greetings and extended his loving regards on his Sixtieth birthday.

Public meeting was inaugurated by Kerala Governor Sri P. Ramachandran. Home Minister Sri Vayalar Revu took the chair. Among the prominent figures on dais were Revenue Minister Sri P. J. Joseph ; M. P. Sri Joseph Mundackel ; M.L.As. Sri Oommen Chandy and Sri P. C. George ; Bishops Rt. Rev. M. M. John and Rt. Rev. T. S. Joseph. Our Moderator could not attend the function because of the sad demise of pastor in his diocese.

The Diocesan Lay Secretary Sri C. C. Jacob presented a 'Mangala Pathram' (Leaves worn for heralding auspiciousness) to our Bishop Michael John. Bishop M. M. John unveiled a full size portrait of Bishop Michael John and Bishop T. S. Joseph released a short book of his biography.

Bishop Michael John made the welcome speech and Very Rev. P. D. John gave vote of thanks.

Bishop's visit to W. Germany

Our bishop K. Michael John and his wife Mrs. Alice John are invited by the Protestant Church in HESSEN and NASSAU, West Germany. As such, they will be visiting them for three weeks from the 4th May 1985.

K. J. GEORGE,
Diocesan Correspondent.

[APRIL 1985]

KARNATAKA SOUTHERN DIOCESE

CSI Sushanthi Church—Maddur

A new Church was built and dedicated by the Rev. D. P. Shettian, Moderator's Commissary, KSD, at Maddur, Maddur Pastorate to the Glory of God and to the benefit of 23 families. The newly constructed Sushanthi Church was built within a cost of Rs. 95,000 and out of which the CSI Synod and the Diocese shared a sum of Rs. 50,000



The New C. S. I. Church at Maddur

and the rest was met by donations from well-wishers and friends. Within this amount a small house for the Church Worker and compound wall were built.

May the Triune God bless this Church and the congregation which assembles here for worship abundantly and may the souls who gather here find their spiritual strength from the Word of God preached from the pulpit and peace

from the presence of the Almighty in the Altar in all the days of their life.

REV. S. JATHANNA.

MADURAI-RAMNAD DIOCESE

Miss C. Davamani B.A., L.T. (1910-1984)

We are indeed very sorry to inform our readers about the death of Miss C. Devamani.

As Miss Davamani's father was Clerk at Capron Hall, Madurai, Chellamani was educated at the school attached to Capron Hall. From 1927-31 Chellamani studied at the Women's Christian College, Madras and graduated in Philosophy and one of her fellow students noticed how precisely and concisely she answered questions. She took her Licentiate in Teaching at St. Christopher's Training College, Madras in 1932 and started teaching at Capron Hall and continued there for some years. She then taught in Jaffna for a short time and returned to Madurai and taught in O.C.P.M. for a time.

In 1951 she became one of the first students of the newly opened Christa Seva Vidhyalaya in the W.C.C. campus, Madras with Miss M. Wigan as Director. Whilst there she visited Ewart School, Madras where Miss Greene, the Principal, was shortly due to retire. In 1953 Miss Davamani became Principal of Ewart School and served there with distinction until 1970, when she retired. Whilst there a new Science block was built and this has now been named in her memory. She will be remembered for her lovely smile, conciliatory manner and excellent teaching methods. The School Motto 'I serve' was certainly true of her. Nothing was too much trouble to her if it furthered the interests of Ewart School, her Staff and pupils.

—O. E. RIPPENGAL.

Notices

WANTED

Applications are invited for a new professional Post-graduate Degree course in Ministry called the Degree of Master of Ministry (M.Min.) from qualified persons. This is a non-residential professional degree course offered by the Senate of Serampore College through its selected affiliated colleges.

Academic requirements :

A pass in the B.D. or B.Th. degree with at least 5 years of experience in the Christian Ministry.

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For further particulars and application forms, please write to

The Principal,
Tamilnadu Theological Seminary
Arasaradi, MADURAI-625 010.

with Rs. 25 by M.O. before 15th May, 1985.

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FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND APPLICATION FORMS WRITE TO :

CHAIRMAN,
SELECTION COMMITTEE,
P. O. BOX 8423,
BANGALORE-560 084.

NEWS from All Over . . .

PHILIPPINE BISHOP KIDNAPPED, RELEASED

ZAMBOANGA (Philippines) (EPS)—Roman Catholic Bishop Federico Escaler and eight other were kidnapped (22 February) by people thought to be members of a Muslim secessionist group. They were reported freed three days later. The bishop has been a campaigner for human rights and against alleged military abuses. No motive for the kidnapping was immediately established.

IRANIAN REFUGEES OCCUPY DANISH CATHEDRAL

COPENHAGEN (EPS)—About 100 Iranian refugees occupied the Lutheran cathedral here for a weekend (23-25 February) to protest Danish authorities' refusal to grant two Iranians political asylum. The case of the two was seen as a test case for more than 2,300 Iranians in Denmark seeking asylum. The group subsequently marched for the Folketing (Danish Parliament) for discussions with politicians. Denmark's Refugee Tribunal gave no reason for its decision, whom supporters said face imprisonment and possible execution if they go back to Iran.

MARINE BIOLOGIST TO GET TEMPLETON PRIZE

LONDON (EPS)—Marine Biologist Alister Hardy, 89, founder in 1969 of the Religious Experience Research Unit, is to receive the 1985 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, at a private ceremony (14 May) in Buckingham Palace. Sir Alister's Unit studies the extent to which people are aware of influence by a presence or power different from their everyday lives. His view is that the highly developed human sense of the religious is of some advantage in evolutionary terms for survival of the species. Mother Teresa of Calcutta won the first Templeton Prize in 1973. Later winners have included US evangelist Billy Graham, exiled Soviet author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and Brother Roger of Taizé. The prize, described as the world's largest, is now worth 1,70,000 UK pounds.

US PRESBYTERIAN ASSEMBLY TO GET RECOMMENDATION ON ORDINATION

PHILADELPHIA (EPS)—Three boards of the Presbyterian Church (USA) have recommended that this year's PCUSA general assembly amend the denomination's Book of Order to create the office of ordained Christian educator. If approved also by enough presbyteries (regional units), it would take effect 1 January 1988. It would give the denomination a fourth ordained office, besides those of elder, deacon and 'minister of the word' (presbyter).

JAFFNA PRIESTS CRITICIZE SRI LANKAN BISHOPS

The New Delhi-based SAR church news agency reported that priests of the Roman Catholic diocese of Jaffna have criticized the Roman Catholic bishops of Sri Lanka because they consider too weak the bishops' statement on the murder of Roman Catholic priest Mary

Bastian. They charged that the statement was non-committal, and that it failed to condemn or deplore the murder. They contrasted it with what they described as a stronger telegram about the murder of a Japanese Buddhist monk and also regretted the failure of the bishops to condemn the murder of Methodist minister G. N. Jeyarajasingham. Jaffna is located in the north of Sri Lanka, a centre for minority Tamils. The country has experienced much violence involving the majority (Sinhalese) and minority communities.

ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP PROTESTS NIGERIAN CHURCH BURNINGS

LAGOS. Nigerian Anglican Archbishop Timothy Olufosoye says that after 21 church buildings were destroyed by arson in a mostly Muslim northern Nigeria, authorities are denying construction and planning permits to rebuild many of them because they are said to be too near mosques. 'We have tried to convince the authorities to let us rebuild on the same premises', Olufosoye said, 'but their argument is that tension would rise if the churches are too close. But our argument is that we have had churches standing in these places for years.' Nairobi-based Africa Church Information Service says 'the arson is believed to be part of the ongoing Islamization process launched by a number of Arab countries in black Africa.'

FINNS DISCUSS HERESY CHARGES—Some pastors in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland have asked that Heikki Raisanen, a pastor and New Testament professor at the University of Helsinki, be disciplined for alleged heresy. According to a report from the SELK Information Centre, the pastors say Raisanen 'denies divine incarnation, Jesus Christ's reconciliation and historical resurrection, the fact that the apostolic church was founded by Jesus, and that Jesus instituted baptism and gave us a command to make disciples of all nations. The centre reports the letter 'stimulated lively public debate on the subject of critical interpretations of the Bible in relation to the doctrine and confession of the church.' Addressing the Lutheran bishops' conference, Turku Archbishop John Vikstrom emphasized that 'nobody can determine in advance what kinds of results research should lead to. It is also quite obvious that no research result can be corrected on the basis of (the church's) confession.' But the centre also reported the primate 'reminded his colleagues of the limitations that must be observed in relation to methods, especially where the faith of the church is concerned.'

The professor's bishop, Samuel Lehtonen of Helsinki, says he is having discussions with Raisanen. 'Everything possible must be done to avoid trials relating to the doctrine and confession of the Church', Lehtonen said, adding that the professor 'enjoys the freedom that is the inalienable right of all scientific researchers. It is equally obvious', the bishop continued, 'that a pastor performing his ministry in the church must adhere to the confession of the church, to which he has committed himself at his ordination.'

Book Review

Protestant Christianity and People's Movements in Kerala

1850-1936 by J. W. Gladstone ; Published by The Seminary Publications, Kerala United Theological Seminary, Kannamoola, Trivandrum, 1984 ; Price Rs. 45. Review by Mr. K. I. Ninan.

This book is the author's doctoral dissertation. Studies on Christian mass movements in Kerala are few. Therefore, Gladstone's work is a valuable addition in the field.

The book gives a lucid exposition of the mass movements led by British Protestant missionary bodies, namely, the London Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society during the period 1850 to 1936 in the central and southern parts of Kerala, formerly known as the 'native state' of Travancore.

The emphasis of the work is sociological, though the author gives his theological reflections on the mass movements in the final chapter on conclusions. He critically examines the beginning of this remarkable phenomenon in the nature of a movement of the people, its growth and its results against the socio-religious and political background of the 19th century Kerala. He does it in the way an Indian should examine them—the work of English missionaries in Kerala during the pre-independent days.

The Christian mass movements were the movements of the poor and the oppressed in the society, namely, pulayas, parayas, kuravas, mala arrians and shanars. The author uses the word Christian mass movement in a technical sense, and he wants the reader to understand it as group conversions within the boundaries of caste. Caste Hindus did not join the movements ; on the contrary, they were opposed to them. According to Gladstone, the struggle of the masses was not for their liberation but for social freedom. Such a distinction has been made by the author as the word liberation has gained a special meaning in recent theological discussions. The Church in Travancore belonged to these masses, as it was one that was formed in their long struggle for justice, identity and social advancement. Protestant missionaries led these movements with the active participation of their 'native agents'. Even revival preachers who had hardly any education also played a significant role in their growth. The movements were not an extension of the Western Christendom as the author has pointed out, though, Western thought and financial support from the West played an important part in them, besides the foreign culture.

The movements of the depressed class people towards the London Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society became conspicuous by 1850 in Travancore, after the strenuous endeavours of the missions for about four decades. The phenomenon became a vital force of an unprecedented nature that began to drastically change the Kerala society. The first baptism among the pulayas was in 1854. The movements gained strength before the end of the last century and began to decline very soon. The efforts of the missionaries for abolition of slavery in Travancore, to some extent paved the way for the growth of the mass movements. The problem with mass movements is that sooner or later they refuse to move. What once used to be a vigorous movement towards the Church, clearly turned into a movement away from the Church by 1936. The author ends his survey with this crucial year which is an important one in the history of Travancore.

Izhavas were the last to join this Christian movement. Though they were by and large financially better placed than the slave caste, had also suffered many social disabilities and were subjected to the rigour of the rules of untouchability and pollution. Conversion from Hinduism

was the solution that a large section of Izhavas saw for remedying their social grievances. The enthusiasm of Izhavas to join the Protestant Church subsided when the government of Travancore promulgated the Temple Entry Proclamation in 1936 opening public temples to all Hindus irrespective caste distinctions.

The Church became the symbol of emancipation and advancement during the mass movements. The impact of the Christian mass movements was direct as well as indirect. As the author has rightly pointed out, though the work of the missionaries came as an external factor in the life of the society, its direct or indirect impact functioned as one of the forces behind many movements within the society. The truth is that, the growth of the mass movements contributed much to their eventual decline and extinction.

The identity which the depressed class gained as a result of their struggles while remaining within or without the Church, the formation of neo-Hindu organisations and the commencement of socio-religious bodies like the SNDP and NSS and the political consciousness that Keralites gained as evidenced in the first half of this century, can be traced to the beginning of the Western education which the missionaries brought to Kerala and the justice and freedom that the missionaries and their co-workers championed for the progress of the depressed class people. The Christian mass movements helped a Hindu revival and greatly led to Hindu consolidation in Kerala. Consequently more and more Hindus received acceptance as Hindus.

Though social emancipation and protection from oppression by the Government and the high caste Hindus were important factors for the poor folk to look up to the missionaries who had education and money and also the sympathy of the British raj, an image of a God who loves and who sacrificed himself for their sins, in the place of an animistic or demon God, was an attraction for them to embrace the Christian religion. The author analysis in his book the various reasons for the growth of the movements towards the protestant Church.

Any number, the missionaries could have admitted into their Church. But they were not interested in counting the heads. On the contrary, they were interested in counting the souls. To have admitted into the Church those without the Christian faith but had come in with redressal of social grievances in view, was to soon destroy the Church from within. Inspite of the missions being selective, a great many of the present generation of the mass movement converts have become disenchanted with the Church on account of governmental policies after Indian independence or have become disillusioned in their relations with the Church owing to lack of pastoral care.

The convert's came into the Church as a caste. Even though members of the Church are bound by one faith, caste feelings continued to prevail within the Church. How far the missionary and the Indian leadership were interested in removing caste from the Church or whether they have genuinely tried to remove this malady is a moot point. But it is a fact that caste feelings did create and continue to create internal tensions in the Churches even today.

The sources for Gladstone's thesis are mainly primary: missionary letters published and unpublished and other authentic records preserved in various archives in England. As such, the work will be of much use as a reference book for those who may not have an opportunity to visit those archives. Besides the missionary materials available in India, government sources have also been consulted. The part played by the important among the British missionaries like Mead, Cox, Hawksworth, Painter and Caley and those in Indian leadership has found a place in the book. The upsurge created by the social reformer Ayyan-

Notices

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Applications are invited for the following posts in CSI Hospital, Chikballapur-562 101, Kolar Dt. Karnataka.

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B.Sc. Nurse — Rs. 525-25-675-EB-35-1025 + DA + Ad hoc

Ward Sister — RN RM with recognised Ward sister Certificate + 2 years service as Staff Nurse. Rs. 500-20-620-EB-25-870.

Staff Nurse — RN RM
Rs. 400-430-15-520-EB-20-720 + DA + Ad hoc.

Pharmacist — SSLC/PUC + 2 years Diploma in Pharmacy. Rs. 350-10-410-EB-15-560 + DA + Ad hoc.

Laboratory Technician — PUC + 1 year CMAI Diploma
Rs. 300-10-360-EB-15-510 + DA + Ad hoc.

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Qualifications : Minimum 11th class postgraduation with training.

Experience : At least 15 years service including 5 years as Head of Department. Should have taught the ICSE and ISC classes in any reputed School.

Book Review—(Contd. from p. 17)

kali, a depressed class Hindu and that by Chattampi-swamikal and Sree Narayana Guru has also found treatment in the book while the author deals ably with Hindu response to the Christian mass movements.

The title of the book gives the impression that it covers the entire State of Kerala, whereas, it deals only with the area consisting of erstwhile Travancore. The work of

Church Affiliation : Should be a member of Church of South India.

Age : Between 40 years—50 years.

Salary : Pay Scale of Rs. 1050-40-1250-50-1600 with admissible allowances. Total salary around Rs. 2000. Higher salary could be considered commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Apply with bio-data through proper channel on or before 30th April 1985, and give addresses of two responsible persons for reference.

Contact : Warden & Correspondent,

St. George's Grammar School,
Abid Road, Hyderabad-500 001 (A.P.)

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Applications are invited for the posts of (1) Senior Accountant—1 post (2) Junior Accountant—1 post.

With Typewriting as additional qualification in the office of the Diocesan Treasurer, Diocese of Dornakal, Dornakal.

(1) **Pay Scale** : Salary commensurate with qualification and experience, in the scales approved by the Diocese.

(2) **Qualifications and Experience** : Preferably a graduate in Commerce, for persons who are not Commerce graduates, knowledge of book-keeping is essential. *Must be able to correspond in English independently.*

(3) **Age** : Persons between the age of 40 to 45 years are needed to apply.

Knowledge of Telugu. Commitment and devotion to work and good Christian background, and a congenial family life is essential.

The posts carry responsibilities like handling cash. Retired persons can also apply.

Persons who fulfil the above conditions may apply with Bio-data to,

The Diocesan Treasurer
Diocesan Office
Cathedral Compound
DORNAKAL-506 381,
Warangal Dt. (A. P.)

With copies of testimonials and certificates from two respectable persons and with references of two responsible persons for verification and to stand surity.

Travel will be paid to the candidates selected and called for interview.

Applications should reach this office on or before 30-4-1985.

Salvation Army could also have been adequately dealt with in the book. It is desirable to include in the book an index of key words.

The low price is an added attraction to this well got up work with over four hundred and fifty pages, and the price brings it within easy reach of libraries, students and laymen alike.

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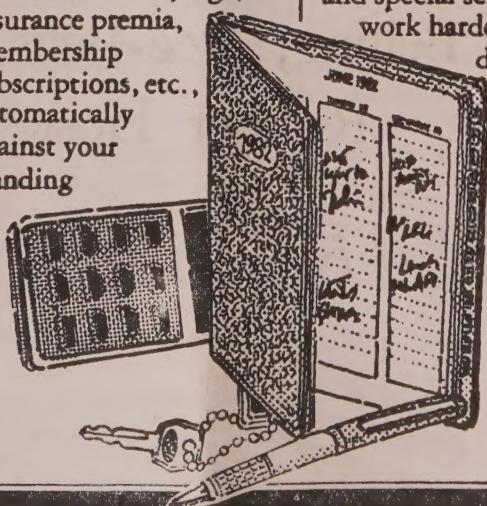
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